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ABSTRACT

This guide briefly discusses the uses, strengths, and limitations of various assessment instruments in English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) classes for adults. The types of instruments selected for discussion are limited to those that are used in Adult Education Cooperatives in Texas, or those that are readily available to those cooperatives. The guide is divided into three sections that are intended to provide access to assessment instruments according to students' general levels of proficiency, classroom situation, and title. Section 1 contains category headings for beginning, intermediate, and advanced levels, and a list of the most appropriate placement/assessment instrument(s) for each level. Section 2 briefly describes a number of real-life classroom situations and lists assessment/placement instruments that fit each situation, and section 3 provides a list of readily available assessment instruments, alphabetically by name, with a brief discussion of their uses, strengths, and limitations in adult ESL classes. (GLR)

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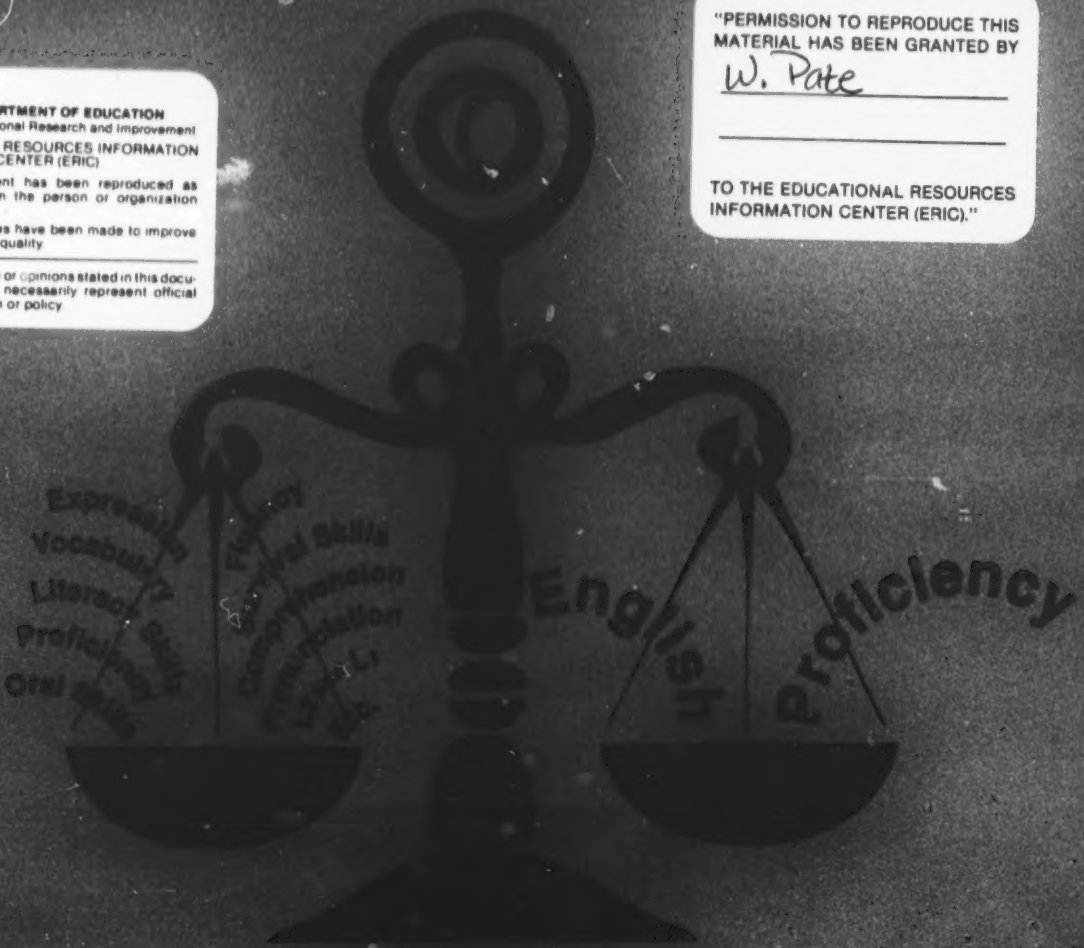

Texas Education Agency
Division of Adult And Community Education
Program Development

Spring 1990

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ASSESSMENT OF ADULT LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT STUDENTS: A GUIDE TO AVAILABLE INSTRUMENTS

TEXAS EDUCATION AGENCY
DIVISION OF ADULT AND COMMUNITY EDUCATION
PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

SPRING 1990

ASSESSMENT OF ADULT LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT STUDENTS: A GUIDE TO AVAILABLE INSTRUMENTS

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PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

This document has been developed to briefly discuss the applications (uses, strengths, and limitations) of various assessment instruments to English as a Second Language (ESL) classes for adults. The type of instruments selected for discussion has been limited to those instruments which tend presently to be in place in Adult Education Cooperatives in Texas, or those which are readily available to those cooperatives.

The reader should note that the instruments discussed in this document are **not** limited to tests which were originally designed for use with limited English proficient (LEP) students, since several other more general instruments have relevant applications to adult ESL classes.

It should also be noted that the purpose of this work is **not** to provide an exhaustive critique of all available and relevant assessment instruments, or to rank or endorse particular instruments. The intent is simply to provide a starting point in the assessment instrument selection process for adult educators by commenting briefly on the adult ESL classroom applications of the instruments selected and discussed.

Where can these instruments be located?

Tests discussed in this document can be ordered from the publisher*. Test publishers are included in the discussion of each instrument in Section III.

Samples can also be obtained from the Adult and Community Education Clearinghouse for Texas, Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas.

Types of Assessment

Although assessment can be categorized and defined in many ways, the definitions below are included because they apply directly to Adult ESL Education classes and programs.

What are the Main Kinds of Assessment?

1. **Standardized Assessment** involves the consistent use of a common instrument(s) (all of the instruments discussed in this document are standardized). Using a standardized test allows the assessor to make some comparisons between the skills and skill deficits of various students assessed. Standardized instruments are usually intended for use with large numbers of subjects. Such issues as reliability, validity, consistency and ease of administration/scoring (etc.) are considered important in the selection of standardized tests.

2. **Non-standardized assessment** involves the use of instruments to assess specific skills and skill deficits and are very often used to assess skills/content gained from a specific course or class. Teacher-made tests are the most common example of nonstandardized assessment instruments. A nonstandardized test's ability to indicate the extent of mastery or nonmastery of a skill or concept by a student is its most desireable feature.

3. **Informal assessment** usually involves the use of qualitative measures of the skill/concept mastery or nonmastery by a student. Rather than involving written responses like those common to standardized and teacher-made tests, informal assessment may include a students' verbal answers or questions, or nonverbal indicators of interest and understanding. Examples include: a students' eye contact, body language, ability to respond appropriately to instructions, willingness to participate in instructional activities, general interest in the lesson, etc. Informal assessment more commonly involves a process, rather than an instrument.

*See also list of Publishers, p. 24.

What Can We Do With Assessment Instruments/Processes?

1. **Assessment for placement** involves finding out which skills (and levels of skills) a student has and which skills he/she lacks. Hopefully, assessment for placement will occur before instruction begins. Ideally, placement includes the use of standardized and nonstandardized instruments, as well as an informal assessment process. Realistically, however, time and staffing constraints often limit assessment for placement purposes to the use of a single standardized instrument. Assignment to a level or class results from placement assessment.

2. **Diagnostic assessment** involves using information gathered about a students' skill level to plan specific ways for helping that student learn new skills. The teachers who do diagnostic assessment best are continually developing hunches about how to help each student learn more effectively. They also have a talent for "getting inside the students' heads," and finding out about his/her interests, learning styles, etc. Optional diagnostic assessment will include the use of standardized and nonstandardized instruments, as well as informal assessment processes.

3. **Assessment for evaluation** involves finding out which skills (and levels of skills) a student has learned through instruction. Evaluation may use standardized tests, nonstandardized instruments, or an informal process, but it ***must assess what the student has been taught***. Therefore, nonstandardized instruments are commonly used for the following reasons: teacher-made tests most accurately assess what has ***actually been taught***; they tend to measure the same skills and skill levels for all students assessed; they allow teachers to compare the skills of students on a given skill as taught to all students; and they tend to more accurately measure the skill-level of students than an informal assessment process.

In summary—The appropriate use of standardized assessment instruments such as those discussed in this document is first to set general parameters of skill levels which can be used to place a student into a level or class. Teachers may then use a combination of standardized instruments, teacher-made tests and informal assessment processes to diagnose individual students and aid in individual learning. After a preriod of instruction, standardized instruments may also be used to evaluate the skill levels attained by students through that instruction.

How to use this document

This document is divided into three sections, which are intended to provide access to assessment instruments by (1) students' general levels of proficiency, (2) classroom situation, and (3) title.

- Section I contains category headings for beginning, intermediate, and advanced levels, and a list of the most appropriate placement/assessment instrument(s) for each level. More information about a test can be found in Section III.
- In Section II a number of "real-life" classroom situations are briefly described, and assessment/placement instruments which fit each situation are listed. More information on a test can be found in Section III.
- In Section III a number of readily available assessment instruments are arranged ***alphabetically by name***, with a brief discussion of their uses, strengths, and limitations in adult ESL classes.

Some Considerations on Assessing Language

A common characteristic of language placement and assessment instruments is that none of them are completely adequate for assessing all facets of language ability. To appreciate the complexity of the task, the reader should keep in mind the following points:

- Language ability appears to involve most of the functional centers of our "cognitive" brain areas, and the total information storage capacity of these areas is estimated at more that sixty times that of the worldwide AT&T Network.

- There seems to be an emerging consensus in the scientific community that learning language is the most intellectually demanding task which humankind undertakes.
- Verbal communication through language is further complicated by factors such as:
  - attitudes, abilities, and personal experiences of language learners
  - social context and functions of language (for example, registers, relative status of speakers, purposes and acceptable etiquette, etc.)
  - differences in dialects
  - assumptions about the world which are embedded in the gramatical structure of each language, etc.
- Assessment is further complicated by the fact that language is our main tool for assessing language; this fact makes the task a great deal like trying to "bite your own teeth."
- Realistic assessment of adult ESL classes must also account for the full range of language and literacy levels one may encounter in any classroom. With this consideration in mind the following set of categories is suggested as a way to consistently sort out these issues (and students) for effective instruction.*

These categories were developed to be parallel to ESL categories for secondary grades in TEA's *Guidelines for Language Usage in Bilingual Education and English as Second Language Programs.* They are as follows:

- LEP Advanced—These students have limited English skills, as well as academic skills at levels 9-12 in their first language; they are interested in GED or CBHSD preparation;
- LEP Intermediate—These students have limited English skills, and literacy, numeracy and coping skills at levels 5-8 in their native language;
- LEP Basic—These students have limited English skills, and literacy/numeracy skills in their first language at grade equivalent levels 0-4;
- LEP Graduate—These students are monolingual in their native language and have completed a high level of education or professional training in their native language; many are licensed or certified professional and lack only English proficiency;
- LEP Preliterate—These students are either monolingual non-English speakers or very limited in English; they have few or no literacy skills in their first language, and may have no previous school experience.
- LEP Preliterate, Non-Roman—These students have limited English skills, literacy/numeracy skills in their first language at levels 0-4,and they come from a culture or background which provides no experience with the Roman alphabet.

Let's Get Practical

Since the area of assessing language is so complex, and since it is understandable that none of the available instruments is satisfactory in all aspects, it is suggested that the following elements be incorporated into any language assessment process:

- Use of a standardized, objective instrument (for consistency and comparability of scores in the placement process);
- Use of an interview format for at least one component of assessment (to allow a subject to demonstrate his/her level of proficiency in English via this open-ended format);
- Use of a cloze exercise (to allow a subject to demonstrate a holistic level of reading comprehension, if appropriate)

These elements should serve to provide a relatively full and manageable view of individual students' English proficiency which will serve the program adequately for purposes of placement, evaluation, and, to a lesser degree, instructional diagnosis.

*Note that these categories differ greatly from those categories suggested for **placement** into instructional levels (see Section I).

SECTION I
ESL Levels

This section describes a level* of English proficiency for Adult ESL students and lists some of the assessment/evaluation instruments which are most appropriate for each level. Included is a "comprehensive" category, which lists instruments useful for initial placement and/or assessment of ESL students' abilities at all levels. After students are divided into levels, teachers can derive additional information useful for instruction by using one or more instrument(s) from the level(s) appropriate for their students. Also included is the entry number for each instrument in Section III.

If an instrument is listed under more than one category, it is appropriate to all levels where listed.

Comprehensive Instrument (for Initial Placement)

Adult Basic Education—Placement: #1
Basic English Skills Test (BEST): #2
Bilingual Vocational Oral Proficiency Test (BVOPT): #3
English as a Second Language Oral Assessment (ESLOA): #16
Language Assessment Scales, Level II (LAS-II): #16
Lindholm ESL Proficiency Test: #19
Mattran Oral Inventory: #22
New Horizons in English (test corresponds to tests in this system): #24
Placement of ESL Students according to Level (Cavazos): #25
"Students Needs Assessment" (TESOL Newsletter): #29
[New] InterCom Test: #14

Beginning Level:

ESL Placement (Texas A&I): #7
Levels of English Proficiency (LOEP): #18
Walsh ESL Placement and Literacy Assessment: #32
Literacy Assessment Survey: #20

*Federal guidelines for Adult Education programs list and define the following levels for ESL classes:

BEGINNING ESL—Instruction designed for adults who have limited or no proficiency in the English language. Instructional emphasis is on listening and speaking.

INTERMEDIATE ESL—Instruction for adults who have some competence in communicating in English. Instruction in reading and writing is introduced along with continued emphasis on speaking and listening.

ADVANCED ESL—Instruction designed for adults who are able to communicate in English but who need instruction in usage. At this level emphasis is placed on idioms, language for specific purposes, and grammatical structure. Reading and writing are integrated with speaking and listening.

Intermediate Level:

Communication Skills Placement Test: #5
ESL Placement (Texas A&I): #7
The Fred Test: #8
Gates-MacGinitie Reading: #12
Lado English Series Placement Test: #15
Laubach Way to Reading: #17
Levels of English Proficiency (LOEP): #18
READ (LVA): #20
Walsh ESL Placement and Literacy Assessment: #31
Express Ways Placement Test: #8

Advanced Level:

Botell Reading Inventory: #4
The Fred Test: #9
[Official] GED Practice Test: #10
Gates-MacGinitie Reading: #12
Lado English Series Placement Test: #15
Michigan Test of English Language Proficiency (MTELP): #23
READ: #27
Side by Side (Book 2A): #28
Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), Vocabulary & Practice Test: #30
Wide Range Achievement Test—R (WRAT-R): #32

SECTION II
Classroom Situations

This section lists as categories some of the typical situations describing student needs and abilities which teachers of adult ESL classes commonly encounter. Students' levels of ability or proficiency in these skill areas must be assessed for teachers to provide effective instruction.

Under each "situation" category are listed the placement/assessment instruments which are most appropriate for assessing that situation. The entry number for each instrument listed in Section III is included (#1, #2, etc).

Note that instruments listed under more than one category are appropriate for assessing all situations for which they are listed.

Situation/Purpose

Assessment of Students' Interests

Students Needs Assessment (TESOL Newsletter): #29
Adult Basic Education—Placement: #1
Communication Skills Placement Test: #5
English as a Second Language Oral Assessment (ESLOA): #6

Initial/Comprehensive Assessment of English Skills

Language Assessment Scales, Level II (LAS-II): #16
Placement of ESL Students according to Level (Cavazos): #25
Basic English Skills Test (BEST): #2
New Horizons in English Placement Tests (correspond to instructional materials from this series): #24
[New] InterCom Test: #14

Informal/Classroom Diagnostics

Students Needs Assessment TESOL (Newsletter): #29
Lindholm ESL Proficiency Test: #19

Assessment of Literacy Levels in English

Adult Basic Education—Placement: #1
Laubach Way to Reading: #17
Walsh ESL Placement and Literacy Assessment: #31
Gates—MacGinitie Reading Inventory: #12
English as a Second Language Oral Assessment (ESLOA): #6
Botell Reading Inventory: #4
Lado English Series Placement Test: #15
READ (LVA): #27
Literacy Assessment Survey: #20

Assessment Oral Proficiency in English

Walsh ESL Placement and Literacy Assessment: #31
Mattran Oral Inventory: #22
Communication Skills Placement Test: #5
Bilingual Vocational Oral Proficiency Test (BVOPT): #3
English as a Second Language Oral Assessment (ESLOA): #6
ESL Placement (Texas A&I): #7
The Fred Test: #9
ExpressWays Placement Test: #8

Vocabulary Assessment in English

Wide Range Achievement Text—R (WRAT-R): #32
Botell Reading Inventory: #4
Gates—MacGinitie Reading Inventory: #12
Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL): #3

Assessment of Reading Comprehension/Composition Skills in English

[Official] GED Practice Test: #10
READ (LVA) #27
Michigan Test of English Language Proficiency (MTELP): #23
Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL): #30
Wide Range Achievement Test—R (WRAT-R): #32
ExpressWays Placement Test: #8

SECTION III
Instruments by Title

Section III contains summary comments on the uses, strengths, and limitations of each of twenty-six readily available instruments. Tests are arranged **alphabetically by title.**

#1 Title: Adult Basic Education (Placement—Teacher's Guide)

Publisher: Continuing Education Texas A&I

General Description: Date of Publication: 1983

1. Placement level: [X] Comprehensive [ ] Beginning [ ] Intermediate [ ] Advanced
2. Time of administration--5-10 minutes
3. Does this instrument correlate to:
   a) a set of instructional materials? No
   b) a familiar skill-level description (i.e., MELT, grade levels, etc.)? No
   c) if yes, which one(s)? NA

Uses and Strengths:

1. The interview format of this instrument is manageable and realistic for an actual interview.
2. The interview format also allows students to demonstrate accurately their level of proficiency by answering questions as briefly or as thoroughly as they choose.

Limitations:

1. At the same time, an interview format assumes students have overcome shyness, anxiety, etc; therefore, interview instruments should not be used until rapport has been established with the student.
2. Questions in this list are not arranged in order of increasing complexity, which can intimidate students and confuse the placment process.
3. Criteria for assessment of responses are inadequate for more than initial placement.

#2 Title: Basic English Skills Test (BEST)

Publisher: Center for Applied Linguistics

General Description: Date of Publication: 1984

1. Placement level: [X] Comprehensive [ ] Beginning [ ] Intermediate [ ] Advanced
2. Time of administration—1 hour
3. Does this instrument correlate to:
   a) a set of instructional materials? Mainstream English Language Training (MELT)
   b) a familiar skill-level description (i.e., MELT, grade levels, etc.)? Yes
   c) if yes, which one(s)? MELT

Uses and Strengths:

This instrument can be used as a "total" assessment for adults in English as a Second Language (ESL) listening comprehension, communications skills, fluency, pronunciation, and literacy skills.

Limitations:

1. This instrument requires one-to-one administration, which makes it time consuming and labor intensive.
2. Many items on this test assume the person being tested is a recent arrival in the U.S., which makes those items highly inappropriate for other limited English proficient adults; this factor seriously limits the appropriateness of this instrument.

#3 Title: Bilingual Vocational Oral Proficiency Test (BVOPT)

Publisher: Melton Peninsula, Inc.

General Description: Date of Publication: 1979

1. Placement level: [X] Comprehensive [ ] Beginning [ ] Intermediate [ ] Advanced
2. Time of administration—20-25 minutes, average
3. Does this instrument correlate to:
   a) a set of instructional materials? No
   b) a familiar skill-level description (i.e., MELT, grade levels, etc.)? No
   c) if yes, which one(s)? No

Uses and Strengths:

1. This test can be used most appropriately to screen prospective students for bilingual vocational training programs.
2. It is also useful to assess skill gains in English proficiency acquired through vocational instruction and training.
3. This instrument is appropriate for adults involved in ESL instruction via either vocational training or life skills-related content.
4. The test not only teaches English language skills, but also includes a process which teaches students to analyze a basic task, complete it, and reach a type of closure.
5. The interview format of this test allows the student to adequately demonstrate English skills.

Limitations:

This instrument is lengthy and requires one-to-one administration. It is labor-intensive; some training in correct administration is necessary. Best use of this test probably should involve only a limited number of puzzling cases where students' proficiencies are particularly difficult to diagnose.

#4 Title: Botell Reading Inventory (Martin Botell)

Publisher: Steck-Vaughn

General Description: Date of Publication: 1973

1. Placement level: [ ] Comprehensive [ ] Beginning [ ] Intermediate [X] Advanced
2. Time of administration—15-30 minutes
3. Does this instrument correlate to:
   a) a set of instructional materials? No
   b) a familiar skill-level description (i.e., MELT, grade levels, etc.)? No
   c) if yes, which one(s)? NA

Uses and Strengths:

This test functions well for assessing ESL students' command of antonym vocabulary at GED and pre-GED levels.

Limitations:

1. This instrument was developed only for use as an informal reading inventory for secondary students.
2. This instrument has not been normed or validated.
3. The "Opposites" section seems to be of limited use for Adult ESL students.

#5 **Title: Communication Skills Placement Test**

Publisher: San Antonio Literacy Council

General Description: Date of Publication: 1978

1. Placement level: [ ] Comprehensive [ ] Beginning [X] Intermediate [ ] Advanced
2. Time of administration—5-10 minutes
3. Does this instrument correlate to:
   a) a set of instructional materials? No
   b) a familiar skill-level description (i.e., MELT, grade levels, etc.)? No
   c) if yes, which one(s)? NA

Uses and Strengths:

1. This test is used to quickly assess a student's proficiency in the communication skills of comprehension and speaking.
2. This instrument also includes a rating scale to assess a student's proficiency in the areas of pronunciation, sentence production, and range of vocabulary usage.
3. The "Recommendations" section provides space for the assessor to write specific comments about individual students' skills and skill deficits.

Limitations:

As with various other instruments,the brevity of this tool requires that it be used with other assessment data or only for tentative placement.

#6 **Title: English As A Second Language Oral Assessment (ESLOA)**

Publisher: Literacy Volunteers of America

General Description: Date of Publication: 1980 (Rev.)

1. Placement level: [X] Comprehensive [ ] Beginning [ ] Intermediate [ ] Advanced
2. Time of administration—30 minutes
3. Does this instrument correlate to:
   a) a set of instructional materials? LVA's ESL Handbook
   b) a familiar skill-level description (i.e., MELT, grade levels, etc.)? No
   c) if yes, which one(s)? NA

Uses and Strengths

1. This test can be used to provide a very brief assessment of the following skills: basic vocabulary; survival vocabulary; oral comprehension and production skills; ability to convert positive statements to negative ones; and past tense and future tense.
2. This instrument includes a scoring guide and scoring criteria, suggested structures, and suggested survival topics to be taught at each level.

Limitations:

This instrument is limited mainly by its brevity and the wide range of skills it attempts to assess. Therefore, it should be used primarily for initial placement/assessment or in conjunction with other instruments. (e.g. Lindholm ESL Proficiency Test).

#7 Title: ESL Placement

Publisher: Continuing Education, Texas A&I

General Description: Date of Publication: 1983

1. Placement level: [ ] Comprehensive [X] Beginning [X] Intermediate [ ] Advanced
2. Time of administration—5-10 minutes
3. Does this instrument correlate to:
   a) a set of instructional materials? No
   b) a familiar skill-level description (i.e., MELT, grade levels, etc.)? No
   c) if yes, which one(s)? NA

Uses and Strengths:

1. This test serves to assess basic oral/written survival English skills.
2. Its interview format is realistic and manageable.
3. The five-point rating scale for responses and its explanation are helpful for achieving consistent placement.

Limitations:

This instrument is appropriate mainly as a check of very basic literacy/comprehension skills.

#8 Title: *ExpressWays* Placement Test

Publisher: Bill Bliss Language & Communication Associates

General Description: Date of Publication: 1988

1. Placement level: [ ] Comprehensive [ ] Beginning [X] Intermediate [X] Advanced
2. Time of administration—
3. Does this instrument correlate to:
   a) a set of instructional materials? ExpressWays Series
   b) a familiar skill-level description (i.e., MELT, grade levels, etc.)? Yes
   c) if yes, which one(s)? *ExpressWays* Series text

Uses and Strengths:

1. This instrument contains both oral and written batteries.
2. Subtests are arranged in order of increasing difficulty/complexity, which improves its predictive accuracy.
3. Subtest formats include tasks which simulate life-coping tasks(i.e., filling out checks, responding to classified ads), as well as cloze exercises, multiple choice, and reading comprehension items.

Limitations:

1. Items ***within*** a subtest are not always arranged in order of increasing complexity, which limits their effectiveness for assessment.
2. The cloze items are extremely limited in their range of difficulty; this limits the ability levels for which they provide useful information.

#9 **Title: The Fred Test**

Publisher: City University of New York

General Description: Date of Publication: 1986

1. Placement level: [ ] Comprehensive [ ] Beginning [X] Intermediate [X] Advanced
2. Time of administration—10 minutes
3. Does this instrument correlate to:
   a) a set of instructional materials? No
   b) a familiar skill-level description (i.e., MELT, grade levels, etc.)? Yes
   c) if yes, which one(s)? The John Test

Uses and Strengths:

1. This test is useful for assessing students' oral comprehension, narrative production, and proficiency with asking questions.
2. Inclusion of the battery on asking questions allows for more accurate placement because it assesses the level of complexity of grammatical transformation students have mastered.
3. Realistic illustrations and situations encourage optimal responses, because students can identify with situations illustrated.
4. Scoring instructions are detailed and clearly stated.

Limitations:

This instrument is too detailed and lengthy to allow for use with all students in most classroom situations. It probably should be reserved for students whose skill levels are unusually difficult to assess.

#10 **Title: [Official] GED Practice Test**

Publisher: Cambridge

General Description: Date of Publication: 1988 (new)

1. Placement level: [ ] Comprehensive [ ] Beginning [X] Intermediate [X] Advanced
2. Time of administration—Depends on test battery
3. Does this instrument correlate to:
   a) a set of instructional materials? No
   b) a familiar skill-level description (i.e., MELT, grade levels, etc.)? Yes
   c) if yes, which one(s)? Scores on the GED Test

Uses and Strengths:

These test batteries can be used for diagnosis of students' proficiencies in many skill areas including: mechanics of grammar, reading comprehension (includes applications to science, social studies, etc.), graphics and map reading, and reading for inference.

Limitations:

The level of difficulty of almost all items in this instrument makes it appropriate only for ESL students working at the GED preparation level.

#11 **Title: [Official] GED Practice Test, Spanish Version***

Publisher: Cambridge

General Description: Date of Publication: 1988

1. Placement level: [ ] Comprehensive [ ] Beginning [X] Intermediate [X] Advanced
2. Time of administration—depends on test battery
3. Does this instrument correlate to:
   a) a set of instructional materials? No
   b) a familiar skill-level description (i.e., MELT, grade levels, etc.)? Yes
   c) if yes, which one(s)? Scores on the GED Test

*The Spanish GED Practice Test is included here because Adult Education program staff should seriously consider the Spanish GED Test as a transitional credential for some Adult ESL students. A significant number of persons will come to Adult ESL classes who are degreed and licensed professionals in their home country and lack only command of English.

Because of problems frequently encountered by these persons in having their certificates, licenses, etc., approved and recognized in the United States, many of them have a need for a GED certificate. Since these persons usually take up residence in neighborhoods where their first language is spoken by a substantial number of people, they can often practice their professions immediately, if they can be licensed to practice. On the other hand, if they fail to learn about the availability of the Spanish GED Test, they often become wards of the state, unable to offer their needed expertise to the communities in which they reside. This state of affairs usually lasts for 1-3 years while they become proficient in English.

The Spanish GED often allows such persons to be productive, taxpaying citizens while learning English.

#12 **Title: Gates-MacGinitie Reading**

Publisher: Riverside

General Description: Date of Publication: 1978

1. Placement level: [ ] Comprehensive [ ] Beginning [X] Intermediate [X] Advanced
2. Time of administration—approximately 40 minutes
3. Does this instrument correlate to:
   a) a set of instructional materials? No
   b) a familiar skill-level description (i.e., MELT, grade levels, etc.)? Yes
   c) if yes, which one(s)? grade levels

Uses and Strengths:

1. This instrument's vocabulary section is useful as an assessment tool for vocabulary development.
2. The comprehension section can also be used to assess students' levels of reading comprehension.

Limitations:

Although both the Vocabulary and Comprehension Sections encompass a wide range of difficulty levels, both are appropriate only for ESL GED students and possibly for a few pre-GED students.

#13 **Title: IDEA Proficiency Test**

Publisher: Ballard and Tighe, Inc.

General Description: Date of Publication: 1979

1. Placement level: [X] Comprehensive [ ] Beginning [ ] Intermediate [ ] Advanced
2. Time of administration—depends on levels completed (5-25 min.)
3. Does this instrument correlate to:
   a) a set of instructional materials? IDEA Instruction Kit
   b) a familiar skill-level description (i.e., MELT, grade levels, etc.)? Yes
   c) if yes, which one(s)? IDEA Instruction Kit

Uses and Strengths:

1. This instrument's format is carefully designed, which results in ease of administration.
2. Test administrators may stop the test when students fail to respond to a sufficient number of items in each section to demonstrate command of the language in that section.
3. Illustrations yield clarity of the task for students.

Limitations:

The primary limitation of this instrument is the fact that the items used are not always arranged in a sequence from simple to complex. As a result, some students may have been stopped from demonstrating command of some of the simpler structures because they failed to score well on more complex items tested in the beginning sections.

#14 **Title: [New] InterCom Test**

Publisher: Heinle and Heinle

General Description: Date of Publication: 1985

1. Placement level: [X] Comprehensive [ ] Beginning [ ] Intermediate [ ] Advanced
2. Time of administration—
3. Does this instrument correlate to:
   a) a set of instructional materials? No
   b) a familiar skill-level description (i.e., MELT, grade levels, etc.)? No
   c) if yes, which one(s)? NA

Uses and Strengths:

1. The oral and written batteries of this instrument assess oral comprehension, oral production, and written structures.
2. Both batteries are closely correlated to numerous situations/functions of language, and to the *New Perspective* texts.

Limitations:

1. Administration of the oral and written batteries requires about 75 minutes; although the written battery may be administered to groups of students, the oral interview must be given individually.
2. The written battery assesses only a student's recognition of correct grammatical structures, not his/her ability to produce them.
3. The fact that both the oral and written batteries fail to arrange items in order of increasing complexity weakens the instrument's effectiveness for placement purposes.

#15 **Title: *Lado English* Series Placement Test**

Publisher: Prentice Hall Regents Publishing Company

General Description: Date of Publication: 1987 (Revised)

1. Placement level: [ ] Comprehensive [ ] Beginning [X] Intermediate [ ] Advanced
2. Time of administration—30-60 minutes
3. Does this instrument correlate to:
   a) a set of instructional materials? Lado English Series texts
   b) a familiar skill-level description (i.e., MELT, grade levels, etc.)? No
   c) if yes, which one(s)? NA

Uses and Strengths:

1. This test is useful for evaluating reading comprehension and a few grammatical structures (i.e. past tense verbs, etc.)
2. It is closely correlated to the instructional activities of the Lado English Series, a widely used system of ESL texts.

Limitations:

The level of difficulty and choice of skills tested make this instrument more appropriate for ESL students with significant amounts of education (i.e., GED and upper pre-GED levels).

#16 **Title: Language Assessment Scales, Level II (LAS-II)**

Publisher: CTB McGraw/Hill

General Description: Date of Publication: 1983

1. Placement level: [ ] Comprehensive [ ] Beginning [X] Intermediate [X] Advanced
2. Time of administration—10-15 minutes
3. Does this instrument correlate to:
   a) a set of instructional materials? Yes (see scoring guide for specific skills)
   b) a familiar skill-level description (i.e., MELT, grade levels, etc.)? Yes
   c) if yes, which one(s)? LAS-II scoring guide includes a widely-recognized 1-5 proficiency scale

Uses and Strengths:

1. This test is used to assess secondary level students in the following language-skill areas: sound discrimination (minimal pairs in isolation as well as critical sounds in context); basic vocabulary; command of critical grammar structures for comprehension; and ability to comprehend and effectively reproduce a story.
2. Of any standardized instrument currently available this instrument may present the most effective assessment of a student's actual language proficiency.
3. Each battery references specific skills to be taught.

Limitations:

1. It is appropriate only for students with skills at grade equivalents 6-12.
2. One-to-one administration makes it time consuming and labor-intensive.
3. Necessary training for administrators/scorers increases the cost of using this test.

#17 Title: **Laubach Way to Reading**

Publisher: **New Readers Press**

General Description: Date of Publication: 1981

1. Placement level: [X] Comprehensive [ ] Beginning [ ] Intermediate [ ] Advanced
2. Time of administration—10-25 minutes
3. Does this instrument correlate to:
   a) a set of instructional materials? *Laubach* Instructional Series
   b) a familiar skill-level description (i.e., MELT, grade levels, etc.)? No
   c) if yes, which one(s)? NA

Uses and Strengths:

1. This test is used to assess students' levels of English literacy.
2. The "check up" sheets in the Skillbook can be used as a skills map for planning lessons/units or as a checklist of skills learned and skill deficiencies.
3. The instrument is generally a very thorough, detailed means to assess skills/deficiencies.
4. It may be used for specific skills remediation.

Limitations:

As with many materials which utilize a programmed instruction approach, users of this instrument must weigh and balance its assessment strengths with its instructional limitations.

#18 Title: **Levels of English Proficiency (LOEP)**

Publisher: **The College Board and Educational Testing Service**

General Description: Date of Publication: 1976

1. Placement level: [X] Comprehensive [ ] Beginning [ ] Intermediate [ ] Advanced
2. Time of administration—Depends on levels completed (0-35 min.)
3. Does this instrument correlate to:
   a) a set of instructional materials?
   b) a familiar skill-level description (i.e., MELT, grade levels, etc.)?
   c) if yes, which one(s)?

Uses and Strengths:

1. The LOEP was developed to assess beginning levels of proficiency in reading, writing, speaking, and listening.
2. Each skill is assessed by 40 questions of graduated difficulty, which thoroughly assess a student's command of that skill.
3. Test scores transfer directly to placement of students into one of three levels: Beginner (entry level), Developmental (high beginner or intermediate), and Functional (academic skills at about fourth or fifth grade level).
4. This test is untimed and therefore allows a student to fully demonstrate command of skills.

Limitations:

1. This instrument is lengthy and time-consuming.
2. Access to and use of this test is controlled by Educational Testing Service which arranges for and charges a fee for its administration and grading.

#19 Title: **Lindholm ESL Proficiency Test**

Publisher: **Dallas County Community College District**

General Description: Date of Publication: 1985

1. Placement level: [ ] Comprehensive [ ] Beginning [ ] Intermediate [X] Advanced
2. Time of administration—30 minutes
3. Does this instrument correlate to:
   a) a set of instructional materials? No
   b) a familiar skill-level description (i.e., MELT, grade levels, etc.)? No
   c) if yes, which one(s)? NA

Uses and Strengths:

1. This instrument consists of a series of cloze exercises which are graduated in levels of difficulty; this is an excellent way to gauge comprehension skills.
2. Attached scoring scale is easy to use and understand.
3. Best use of this instrument is probably in combination with a standardized instrument which addresses the component skills of comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing.

Limitations:

The rather limited number of component skills assessed by this instrument makes it unwise to assess an adult ESL student's level of proficiency by using this test alone.

#20 Title: **Literacy Assessment Survey**

Publisher: **Hadley Press**

General Description: Date of Publication: 1988

1. Placement level: [X] Comprehensive [ ] Beginning [ ] Intermediate [ ] Advanced
2. Time of administration—5-10 minutes
3. Does this instrument correlate to:
   a) a set of instructional materials? No
   b) a familiar skill-level description (i.e., MELT, grade levels, etc.)? No
   c) if yes, which one(s)? NA

Uses and Strengths:

1. This instrument is designed to assess a student's command of basic literacy component skills (i.e., ability to write the alphabet, days of the week, months, recognition of initial sounds, sight words,etc.).
2. It also briefly assesses basic numeracy skills (i.e., addition, subtraction).

Limitations:

1. The instrument fails to include such basic literacy assessment formats as reading comprehension, multiple choice, or cloze exercises.
2. The testing format is simply insufficient for reliable, initial placement.

#21 **Title: Maculaitis Language Assessment Program**

Publisher: Alemany Press

General Description: Date of Publication: 1986 (Revised)

1. Placement level: [X] Comprehensive [ ] Beginning [ ] Intermediate [ ] Advanced
2. Time of administration—depends on level(s) completed; up to 108 minutes
3. Does this instrument correlate to:
   a) a set of instructional materials? No
   b) a familiar skill-level description (i.e., MELT, grade levels, etc.)? Yes
   c) if yes, which one(s)? detailed diagnostic skill levels (spelled out in administrator's manual)

Uses and Strengths:

1. This test contains batteries to assess students' skills in listening comprehension, reading comprehension and writing ability in English. Sections include basic synonyms, recognition of facts in a text, recognizing abbreviations, and selection of appropriate grammar forms.
2. The level of detail on specific skills is very helpful for diagnosis of a student's skills.
3. The format allows the assessor to stop administration of the test when the student cannot respond appropriately.

Limitations:

1. This instrument is designed only for use with students at skill levels 6-12 grade.
2. Length of time necessary to administer may be prohibitive for Adult Education programs. This test can probably be best used for diagnosing the specific skill levels of adult ESL students with skills at levels 6-12 who have been placed in a class via an instrument such as LAS-II.

#22 **Title: Mattran Oral Inventory**

Publisher: University of Nebraska-Lincoln

General Description: Date of Publication: 1978

1. Placement level: [X] Comprehensive [ ] Beginning [ ] Intermediate [ ] Advanced
2. Time of administration—5-10 minutes
3. Does this instrument correlate to:
   a) a set of instructional materials? No
   b) a familiar skill-level description (i.e., MELT, grade levels, etc.)? No
   c) if yes, which one(s)? NA

Uses and Strengths

1. This inventory was created for initial placement of ESL students based on oral proficiency.
2. The interview format, interview schedules, and scoring instructions are detailed and well explained, which results in ease of administration.

Limitations:

The interview schedule is quite brief and should be used only as a tool for initial placement or to support data gathered via another placement instrument.

#23 Title: **Michigan Test of English Language Proficiency (MTELP)**

Publisher: **English Language Institute, The University of Michigan Press**

General Description: Date of Publication: 1968

1. Placement level: [ ] Comprehensive [ ] Beginning [X] Intermediate [X] Advanced
2. Time of administration—75 minutes
3. Does this instrument correlate to:
   a) a set of instructional materials? No
   b) a familiar skill-level description (i.e., MELT, grade levels, etc.)? No
   c) if yes, which one(s)? NA

Uses and Strengths:

1. The MTELP was developed to assess ESL students' command of grammar, vocabulary, and reading comprehension.
2. The multiple choice format incorporates the advantages of the cloze exercise by allowing students to complete a message by choosing the most logical "completer" word or phrase.
3. Scoring instructions are detailed and clear.

Limitations:

1. The level of difficulty of this test is rather high and is probably appropriate only for GED-level ESL students.
2. The lengths of this test makes it prohibitive for use in many classroom situations.

#24 Title: ***New Horizons in English*** **Placement Test**

Publisher: **Addison-Wesley**

General Description: Date of Publication: 1983

1. Placement level: [ ] Comprehensive [ ] Beginning [ ] Intermediate [X] Advanced
2. Time of administration—depends on students' proficiency level (10-45 minutes)
3. Does this instrument correlate to:
   a) a set of instructional materials? ***New Horizons in English*** Series texts
   b) a familiar skill-level description (i.e., MELT, grade levels, etc.)? Yes
   c) if yes, which one(s)? ***New Horizons in English*** Series (skill levels reflected in the various texts of this series)

Uses and Strengths:

1. Each level of this system contains pre- and post-tests with the following batteries: visual/oral comprehension, writing, listening comprehension, and oral production.
2. The listening comprehension section is organized in a multiple-choice format and offers the advantages of a cloze exercise (logical completion of a thought or message).
3. The speaking battery includes instructions and scoring criteria which allow the administrator to rate responses on a continuum of skill levels.

Limitations:

1. The primary problem with this instrument is that the batteries are not sequenced from simplest skills to most complex skills, which can distort the teacher's perception of a student's actual proficiency.
2. The high level of detail assessed by this test may make it impractical for routine use.

#25 Title: Placement of ESL Students According to Level (Christine Fee Cavazos)

Publisher: Texas Clearinghouse for Adult Learning and Literacy

General Description: Date of Publication: 1979

1. Placement level: [X] Comprehensive [ ] Beginning [ ] Intermediate [ ] Advanced
2. Time of administration—5-10 minutes
3. Does this instrument correlate to:
   a) a set of instructional materials? Yes
   b) a familiar skill-level description (i.e., MELT, grade levels, etc.)? Yes
   c) if yes, which one(s)? Various (see "Materials Guide," page 4 of test)

Uses and Strengths:

1. The primary purpose of this instrument is to acquire accurate information about the student in his/her first language.
2. The interview schedule arranges questions in order of increasing complexity.
3. The scoring guide is easy to use.
4. The informal reading inventory is referenced directly to a graded reader.
5. Each proficiency level is accompanied by direct references to instructional materials for students at that level.

Limitations:

1. Proficiency levels are not correlated to other measures of skill levels such as grade level equivalents, etc.
2. The interview schedule is very brief; therefore, this instrument's accuracy should be supported by other data. Placement based on the use of this tool alone should be tentative.

#26 Title: Quick Assessment for Language Proficiency

Publisher: Williams and Williams Publishing

General Description: Date of Publication: 1989

1. Placement level: [X] Comprehensive [ ] Beginning [ ] Intermediate [ ] Advanced
2. Time of administration—5-10 minutes
3. Does this instrument correlate to:
   a) a set of instructional materials? *Action Sequence Stories* Series
   b) a familar skill-level description (i.e., MELT, grade levels, etc.)? Yes
   c) if yes, which one(s)? levels in *Action Sequence Stories* Series texts (Levels 1-4)

Uses and Strengths:

1. This instrument includes Forms 1 & 2, which may be used for pre- and post-test purposes.
2. Items are sequenced from simple to complex, allowing for quick, accurate assessment.
3. Forms 1 & 2 are closely parallel in the skills they assess, although Form 2 reflects a few items which are significantly more complex than Form 1.
4. Form 2 is also available in Spanish, to assess command of a student's first language.
5. This test can be used to assess only oral proficiency or oral and written language.

Limitations:

1. A mixture of objective and holistic scoring procedures makes the task of interpreting results a bit nebulous.
2. Although the criteria of grammatical correctness of response, meaningfulness of the response, length of the utterance, complexity of the utterance and spontaneity of response are suggested for holistic scoring, there are no suggestions for relative weighting of these factors.

3. As with any instrument this brief, this test should be used in conjunction with other instruments for realistic placement or instructional diagnosis.

#27 Title: READ

Publisher: Literacy Volunteers of America

General Description: Date of Publication:

1. Placement level: [ ] Comprehensive [ ] Beginning [ ] Intermediate [X] Advanced
2. Time of administration—
3. Does this instrument correlate to:
   a) a set of instructional materials? Yes (LVA instructional activities)
   b) a familiar skill-level description (i.e., MELT, grade levels, etc.)? No
   c) if yes, which one(s)? NA

Uses and Strengths:

This instrument has sections which allow an instructor to quickly assess a student's command of the following skills: a) sight words, b) word analysis and c) reading/listening skills (a very solid instrument for these purposes).

Limitations:

The READ test assesses only the language skills mentioned above.

#28 Title: *Side by Side* (Book 2A)*

Publisher: Cambridge

General Description: Date of Publication:

1. Placement level: [ ] Comprehensive [ ] Beginning [X] Intermediate [ ] Advanced
2. Time of administration—15-30 minutes
3. Does this instrument correlate to:
   a) a set of instructional materials? *Side by Side* Series
   b) a familiar skill-level description (i.e., MELT, grade levels, etc.)? Yes
   c) if yes, which one(s)? *Side by Side* Series texts

Uses and Strengths:

The *Side by Side* test accompanies the text of the same name and assesses students' command of: appropriate forms of conjugated verbs; appropriate use of prepositions; appropriate selection of similar verbs; appropriate selection of gerunds vs. infinitives; appropriate tense transformations of verbs; appropriate use of idioms.

Limitations:

The component skills required within this system for high-level beginning students or low intermediate students are ambitious and unrealistic for most adult ESL students in Texas. It may be appropriate for some advanced ESL Students.

*Discussion of the assessment material available for this particular level of this system is included here as a sample of the type of assessment materials which this system provides throughout its levels.

#29 **Title: "Student Needs Assessment"**

Publisher: TESOL Newsletter (Winter 1985)

General Description: Date of Publication: 1985

1. Placement level: [ ] Comprehensive [ ] Beginning [ ] Intermediate [X] Advanced
2. Time of administration—10-15 minutes
3. Does this instrument correlate to:
   a) a set of instructional materials? No
   b) a familiar skill-level description (i.e., MELT, grade levels, etc.)? Yes (self-explanatory from the instrument)
   c) if yes, which one(s)? NA

Uses and Strengths:

1. This instrument has sections which allow an instructor to quickly assess a student's command of the following skills: a) sight words, b) word analysis, and c) reading/listening skills (a very solid instrument for these purposes).
2. It may also be used as a student interest inventory.
3. It is helpful for designing and planning units and lessons based on needed skills for practical situations.

Limitations:

This instrument does not allow students to rate the extent of their skill deficiencies or to determine their degree of urgency for learning English for use in a particular practical situation. Columns should be added for this purpose in Part 2.

#30 **Title: Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)***
Vocabulary and Practice Test

Publisher: Educational Testing Service, Inc.

General Description: Date of Publication: 1983

1. Placement level: [ ] Comprehensive [ ] Beginning [ ] Intermediate [X] Advanced
2. Time of administration—1 to 1½ hour
3. Does this instrument correlate to:
   a) a set of instructional materials? No
   b) a familiar skill-level description (i.e., MELT, grade levels, etc.)? Yes
   c) if yes, which one(s)? Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)

Uses and Strengths:

1. This test was designed to assess and then strengthen vocabulary skills among ESL students at the GED and advanced pre-GED levels.
2. Vocabulary definitions are simple and concise; the accompanying sentences generally illustrate meaning very well.

Limitations:

1. Vocabulary terms are arranged alphabetically rather than by topic or situation, which makes them difficult to locate and use for realistic situations.
2. Approximately 90% of the terms included in this instrument will be too advanced for ESL students at the pre-GED level and below.

*Although this instrument is not a placement test, it is included here to assist adult ESL instructors in preparing their students to score well on the TOEFL.

#31 Title: **Walsh ESL Placement (Oral Assessment) and Literacy Assessment (Revised Version)**

Publisher: (Mark Walsh) Continuing Education, Texas A&I University

General Description: Date of Publication: 1983

1. Placement level: [ ] Comprehensive [X] Beginning [X] Intermediate [ ] Advanced
2. Time of administration—5-10 minutes
3. Does this instrument correlate to:
   a) a set of instructional materials? No
   b) a familiar skill-level description (i.e., MELT, grade levels, etc.)? No
   c) if yes, which one(s)? NA

Uses and Strengths:

1. The intent of this instrument is to assess the oral level of students and their literacy proficiency in English.
2. The rating scale and brevity of this instrument make it quick and easy to administer.

Limitations:

1. Both the oral and literacy sections assess only minimal basic levels of proficiency.
2. Any instrument as brief as this one has very limited accuracy in assessment of proficiency. It should be used as a beginning point for assessment rather than a definitive judgement.

#32 Title: **Wide Range Achievement Test-R (WRAT-R)**

Publisher: Jastak Associates Inc.

General Description: Date of Publication: 1984 (Revised)

1. Placement level: [ ] Comprehensive [ ] Beginning [ ] Intermediate [X] Advanced
2. Time of administration—approximately 30 minutes
3. Does this instrument correlate to:
   a) a set of instructional materials? No
   b) a familiar skill-level description (i.e., MELT, grade levels, etc.)? No
   c) if yes, which one(s)? NA

Uses and Strengths

1. "Section 1" in this test can be used to assess informally a student's general level of vocabulary development.
2. "Reading: Level 2" of this test could be used with students who are approaching readiness for the GED.

Limitations:

Only advanced, ESL students at the GED-prep level will find the "Reading: Level 2" test helpful. Most of the vocabulary is far too complex for students at lower levels; it may even be ambitious for most ESL GED students.

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COMPLIANCE STATEMENT

TITLE VI, CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964; THE MODIFIED COURT ORDER, CIVIL ACTION 5281, FEDERAL DISTRICT COURT, EASTERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS, TYLER DIVISION

Reviews of local education agencies pertaining to compliance with Title VI Civil Rights Act of 1964 and with specific requirements of the Modified Court Order, Civil Action No. 5281, Federal District Court, Eastern District of Texas, Tyler Division are conducted periodically by staff representatives of the Texas Education Agency. These reviews cover at least the following policies and practices:

(1) acceptance policies on student transfers from other school districts;

(2) operation of school bus routes or runs on a non-segregated basis;

(3) nondiscrimination in extracurricular activities and the use of school facilities;

(4) nondiscriminatory practices in the hiring, assigning, promoting, paying, demoting, reassigning, or dismissing of faculty and staff members who work with children;

(5) enrollment and assignment of students without discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin;

(6) nondiscriminatory practices relating to the use of a student's first language; and

(7) evidence of published procedures for hearing complaints and grievances.

In addition to conducting reviews, the Texas Education Agency staff representatives check complaints of discrimination made by a citizen or citizens residing in a school district where it is alleged discriminatory practices have occurred or are occurring.

Where a violation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act is found, the findings are reported to the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education.

If there is a direct violation of the Court Order in Civil Action No. 5281 that cannot be cleared through negotiation, the sanctions required by the Court Order are applied.

TITLE VII, CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964; EXECUTIVE ORDERS 11246 AND 11375; TITLE IX, 1973 EDUCATION AMENDMENTS; REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973 AS AMENDED; 1974 AMENDMENTS TO THE WAGE-HOUR LAW EXPANDING THE AGE DISCRIMINATION IN EMPLOYMENT ACT OF 1967; AND VIETNAM ERA VETERANS READJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE ACT OF 1972 AS AMENDED IN 1974.

It is the policy of the Texas Education Agency to comply fully with the nondiscrimination provisions of all federal and state laws and regulations by assuring that no person shall be excluded from consideration for recruitment, selection, appointment, training, promotion, retention, or any other personnel action, or be denied any benefits or participation in any programs or activities which it operates on the grounds of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, handicap, age, or veteran status (except where age, sex, or handicap constitute a bona fide occupational qualification necessary to proper and efficient administration). The Texas Education Agency makes positive efforts to employ and advance in employment all protected groups.

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